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THE ENGLISH NEWSLETTER OF THE TAIWAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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TAIWAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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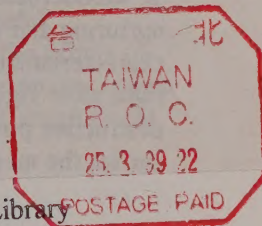
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THE BISHOP'S LETTER

Chinese New Year's Celebration was just over. We are all happy to leave the year of the Tiger behind – a very difficult year with financial turmoil, unemployment, etc. It was also accompanied by terrible flood, earthquake, and hurricane disasters due to the EL Nino effect.

For Chinese people, this is the “Year of the Rabbit”. In China, after the Tang dynasty, the myth of Rabbit on the moon appears in both classical literature and folk religions. A huge statue of a rabbit in a circle above the moon has been erected at Chiang Kai Shek Memorial Park near my residence recently for the celebration of lantern festival.

Rabbit is regarded as a symbol of tenderness and productiveness, of nurturing and new births. Peace is the characteristic of rabbit. Rabbit comes right after Tiger, a symbol of destructive power. The succession carries the meaning of transition from danger to stability. It is our hope that the peaceful rabbit will bring us stability after the financial turmoil. It is also interesting to note that the year of the Dragon, a symbol of growth and prosperity, will follow the year of the Rabbit, which gives us good hope. In company with Graham Doyle and Catherine Lee after a missionary lunch, I visited Hsin Tien Gong, one of the most famous temples in Taipei. Kuankung is the principal god worshipped at this temple. Kuankung began his existence as an ordinary person. He became one of China's “Three Musketeers” and then a genuine

war hero. In 1594, 1400 years after his death, he was elevated to the rank of War God. His role in the pantheon of gods is to ensure Justice. When the Chinese first crossed the Taiwan Straits to Taiwan, they worshipped Matsu, who was the goddess of the sea and of sailors and fishermen. As the people settled in, they began to worship Tu Di Kung, the god of agriculture. And as the island evolved into a commercial society, justice and honesty in business became paramount and Kuankung became the popular god of choice.

The temple was very crowded with people. A great portion of the worshippers were rather young. From their faces we could see their seriousness and urgency to pray for peace as well as success in the year to come. There were also a lot of fortune tellers crowded around the underground tunnel in front of that temple. From these, we can realize the uncertainty of life among people. Where is peace? Can fortune tellers or temple volunteers afford? Why can't the people come to church to look for the true peace we proclaimed? Jesus' words strongly confront us once again, “...they were like sheep without a shepherd.” [Luke 6:34] Then I heard again the Lord say through Isaiah, “Whom shall I send? Who will be My messengers? I do earnestly hope that all Christians will answer with the prophet Isaiah, “I will go! Send me!”

There is an article in the Christian Tribune that stresses that recession is good for evangelism. The setback in

materialistic pursuit will let people think again about the meaning of life, questioning their present lifestyle and feeling the need of other peoples' concerns and cares. No doubt, material things are indispensable to human life but are not the whole. The Lenten season offers a good occasion for us to re-think our life style seriously. Would material become the dominant in our life? How do you think about Jesus' astonishing response to Satan's first

temptation to Him, "Man cannot live by bread alone: he lives on every word that God utters."? How much time do you spend for your spiritual life? How significant is Christian faith in the process of your decision making and daily life?

+John

*The Right Rev. Dr. John C.T. Chien
Bishop of Taiwan*

CLERICAL GARMENTS

By Julia Lin

On Jan. 25 this year (Conversion of St. Paul), a new priest of the Taiwan Episcopal Church was inaugurated. On that night, a joyful atmosphere in the church was created by the aroma of the flowers and the warmth and radiance coming from the red candles on the altar. We all strongly felt that the angels were together with us, worshipping our God with great joy.

In the procession going into the church, we saw that both the bishop, who conducted the ceremony, and the dean were wearing big copes(capes). On the bishop's head was the Mitre, which symbolizes the coming down of the Holy Spirit upon the head of the apostle on Pentecost. Some of the other eight clergymen were in alb and black cassock, while the rest were in black cassock and white surplice. Common to all of them was the red stole around their necks. It is said that the stole symbolizes the willingness of

its wearer to submit his dedication to God. And the color of the stole is the crimson color of the Holy Spirit. According to the Holy Bible, the Holy Spirit had descended from the heaven like the flame. Such careful considerations put into the details of the cassock made the ceremony appear to be even more solemn, magnificent and impressive.

Once we set out to understand the meaning of the garments and their reason for being, I queried other clergymen and teachers from the seminary. I learned that the English word "cassock " refers to the black robe clergymen wear. That was what ordinary people wore everyday during the time of the Roman Empire. When the Christian religion was introduced to north Europe, the white albs priests wore were no longer warm enough to ward off the coldness of the local weather. For that reason, a white surplice was added to the cassock.

Taking the word " surplice " apart, " sur " means " above or on top of something ", while " plice " is the root for the word " skin ". That is the reason why people still wear surplice on top of the black cassock.

When England was separating from the Roman Catholic Church, many common practices changed. Not only did members of the choir start to wear cassock with white surplice, but the priests conducting the Holy Communion also began to wear white robes with a big cope on the outside.

After Queen Elizabeth, the forces of religious reform grew stronger and stronger. The garment people had for the Holy Communion was considered too rich in its insinuation of the Roman Catholic Church. Therefore, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Matthew Park, ordered that both members of the choir and the priest conducting the Holy Communion should wear black cassock and white

surplice. At the turn of the 19th century, flocks from some high churches in England and America demanded that the priests should wear black cassocks all day long, no matter where they are. This is to show their identity of being clergyman.

When conducting the ceremony, priests of the Episcopal Church wear black cassock-alb and white surplice.

Looking back upon Lennon Chang's consecration, it was not the solemn atmosphere nor the beautiful vestments that touched my heart most, it was the bishop's interrogation to the clergy: " Are you willing to dedicate yourself to God, trust in God, and assume the responsibilities of his church? Are you willing to study the Bible diligently and make the greatest effort to be His Evangelist? "

Julia Lin is Bishop Chien's Chinese secretary. This article was translated by M.F. Lin

ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD OF LENNON CHANG

Red is the color for Ordination, the color of the fire of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. It is also the color of life, good luck, and the pulsing of the blood of life.

On Monday Evening, January 25, 1999, in the Chapel of the Advent at the Taiwan Sheng Gong Hue's College in Hsinpu, even the candles were red, as were the vestments of the Bishop and all of the attending clergy,

as Chang Yuen Rong [Lennon Chang], Chaplain and Deacon, was Ordained as Pastor, Elder, Presbyterian, and Priest of the Holy Catholic Church in its Anglican branch.

The chapel itself, for those who have not seen it, is very modern, with a roof in the shape of the traditional Taiwanese farmer's straw hat. The Episcopal college in Tamshui, Northwest of Taipei, called "HsinPu",

is in English, "St. John's and St. Mary's Institute of Technology". It is successor to two Colleges of those names founded on the Mainland by the Episcopal Church of China in the last century.

Chaplain Chang is both Chaplain and faculty member, holding a Ph.D. in mathematics. Students participated in the Service as members of the choirs who performed several anthems and in assisting in the preparation of the pre-service buffet for the many guests.

The Ordination began with a procession of the acolytes, choir, standing committee members and clergy from around Taiwan, and at the end of the procession were the Ordinand and Bishop Chien.

After all were seated, Chaplain Chang signed the Oath of Conformity on the Altar itself. After a series of Questions and Answers from the Prayer Book, The Service became the more usual form of collect, Psalm, scripture lessons and sermon.

Following this was the striking sight of the Priest-to-be, stretched full length on the Chapel floor, face down in his red vestments, as a Chinese translation of the Ninth Century Latin Hymn, "Veni Creator" was chanted, invoking the Holy Spirit in still another way.

The actual Act of Ordination was Bishop Chien laying his hands on Father Chang's head, in the Bishop's

role as successor to the Apostles. Again, he invoked the Holy Spirit for the Office of Priest.

The Service seemed suspended in time, as all came forward to receive the Peace from the new Priest and as he greeted his family members who included his mother.

This was followed by red envelopes and other gifts. Finally the Bishop said "One last Picture!"

The Service was only half-way through, though. Guided by his presenter and predecessor, Dean Lin, the new priest presided over the Eucharistic Thanksgiving. All received the Sacrament of the Body of Christ from the hands of the new priest.

But for me, as a westerner, the last surprise was a wrapped gift for each person attending. Thank you, Chang Yuen Rong, Pastor. Thank You, Lord Jesus Christ for your lifeblood which you continue to give to Your Church, and now at the hands of the Taiwan Episcopal Church's newest priest!

Fr. Peter D'Alesandre

Rev. Peter d'Alesandre preached the ordination sermon Thanks to LiLin Wu, the English secretary of Friendship Presbyterian Church and that Church's e-mail facilities for transmitting Fr. D'Alesandro's manuscript.

PEACE MOTION

The following motion will be offered at the 1999 Diocesan Convention to be held March 12.

1 • We in The Diocese of Taiwan recognizing the particular need for Peace within Asia as well as throughout the world, wish to commit ourselves, as individuals and within Parishes to give a central place to the pursuit of peace, as we proclaim the Gospel message of reconciliation through Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, in our worship and through concrete action in His service.

2 • We wish to dedicate the Last Sunday in Pentecost to the theme of peace, using appropriate Sentences, Collects and Readings or other such material as shall be deemed suitable. We wish to recommend that this

become an annual celebration of Peace encouraged throughout the Diocese.

3 • That these matters be brought forward to The General Convention in 2000 as a Diocese of Taiwan Motion to ask for the insertion of this Peace Day within the calendar of ECUSA.

4 • To encourage our Bishop to raise these matters at the next meeting of The South Asian Christian Council. Furthermore that this Convention commends the paper:-

'An Outline Plan- A Vision for the Future' to the all Parishes for their comments and consideration in extending their work of Peacemaking.'

OUTLINE PLAN-A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

The aim is to set out in the most general terms how Christians may become peacemakers. The Biblical basis has two main references: [A] 'For unto us a child is born, a son is given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.' (Isaiah 9. 6) and [B] Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God.' (St. Matthew 5.9)

Not only is there a Biblical foundation to support this plan but also

many Church Councils have reflected upon how to make peace. An original 1930 resolution [usually updated] of the Lambeth Conference stated that "war as a means of settling international disputes is incompatible with the teaching and the example of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Our aim as peacemakers is to become initiators and originators of peace as followers of the Prince of Peace, who is for us the principle example of a peacemaker. Peace must become valued, owned and popular.

Through our own structured daily living where justice is the standard, we can achieve and manage this aim by pacifistic methods. A just and peaceful society is one that is visible and tangible. It is a society that is a positive force for good and wholeness, producing social and economic profits for all its citizens. That is the reality and purpose of the peacemaker.

Engaging in this task will neither be easy nor quiet. The reality of changing a fallen evil world into a good creation is the work of Christ Himself. What Christ began we must continue joyfully, standing alongside the victims and all their suffering. Our pastoral care must be managed with a genuine, sensitive, and assertive Christian love through friendship. This builds peace.

PEACEMAKERS-creators

PEACEBUILDERS-crafters

PEACEKEEPERS-sustainers

The following 5 points outline a plan as to how this might be achieved .

1. An area of Personal activity. A daily rule for spending time in critical self reflection.

2. An area of Church / Institutional activity. A rule to use peaceful and gentle language in prayers, hymns and conversation. The purpose is to encourage the writing and use of a new body of peaceful thoughts in our liturgies and faith statements. We must

make our priority visible and audible. '

3. An area of Ecumenical / Inter-faith activity. To plan local, national and international venues for public debate and dialogue on what different faith communities understand to be areas for peacemaking.

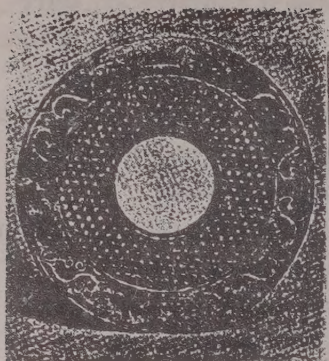
4. An area of Pastoral Care activity. To plan centres of peace that would teach the methods and art of peace-making in appropriate locations of historic conflict. These centres should be preferably managed and staffed by the ordinary local people who have coped with suffering. Their aim would be to focus upon the question, 'How does it feel to be the victim?'

5. An area of Political activity. To promote the establishing of a Ministry of Peace with its Minister holding a Government Cabinet Post. The aim of such a ministry would be to structure and explain policies that give a priority for peace.

These 5 points are only skeletons of a syllabus that needs much more detail for its practical implementation. However, each of us by beginning at number one, the personal activity can achieve some headway in this challenge.

Only by personal example will others sit up and take notice of what we are doing. Our goal is to encourage others to join us.

Rev. Graham Doyle



德光社

愛的文化 福音的先驅

"A family of faith enlightens each of us"

CHINESE CULTURE CLUB

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The Chinese Culture Club was born in 1998, of the interest shown by the clergy and congregation of the American Cathedral in Paris for the Taiwanese Ministry, recently arrived within their walls. (The Taiwanese Ministry in Paris was started in 1984 for the purpose of creating a Christian community among people of Chinese origin who live in Paris.) The Club aims at introducing a Western public with various aspects of Chinese culture and way of life, or Chinese connections with the West. It is meant to provide the public with a deeper awareness of what makes China culture what it is. Although started and sponsored by the Taiwanese Ministry, the Club is self-supporting. (It is also specified that its program will not attempt to examine political or other controversial subjects.)

Realizations are already impressive. A highly successful **Spring Festival**, held on the occasion of the 1998 **Chinese New Year**, was the opportunity to bring China and some of its customs to the West, at the same time as it allowed Chinese and Western people to meet. A presentation and

demonstration of Chinese arts, crafts and customs, with lunch, was attended by a large crowd of Chinese and Westerners. Mr. Houg, a well-known calligrapher, painter and musician, played the Chinese violin and later gave a fascinating impromptu lecture on the subject. For many of our Western friends, this was a real revelation. And for many of the Chinese who came on that day, this was a first contact with us.

Distinguished guests to the Festival included Bishop and Mrs. Rowthorn, Dean and Mrs. Hunt, Taipei Representative and Mrs. Kuo, the U.S. Consul General and his wife, plus other clergy and officials. Many Taiwanese and Chinese from other geographical areas worked on the project for several weeks, side by side with American parishioners.

In September, we started an evening lecture program on Chinese customs and culture. The lectures will be held once a month in the evening, at the American Cathedral (or somewhere else when appropriate), and will be preceded by refreshments.

The September lecture dealt with tea and its significance in Chinese scholarly tradition. In October, we heard of the Imperial Summer Palace of the Yuanmingyuan -- he most important Summer Palace of the Qing dynasty. Quite fittingly, the first speaker was from Taiwan, and the second one from France, our host country: our membership also is very diverse in cultures and nationalities.

In December, our Club enjoyed the Taipei Representative's hospitality in a guided tour of the exhibition

"Treasures of the National Palace Museum of Taipei." (Mr. Kuo kindly organized it for us.)

The full program will be available at the American Cathedral, and advertized with Western and Chinese organizations in Paris. When in Paris, please plan to join us.

**If you would like more information
or to support the Chinese Culture
Club please contact
the Rev. Canon Nathaniel Hsieh.**

TELLING THE SIMPLE STORY

In the last issue of Friendship I described the sharp impact on me made by the powerful presence during my Spring, 1998, sabbatical visit to Hong Kong, Taiwan, S. Korea and Shanghai. Having lived all my life in a "Christian nation," I described how the encounter with other religions helped me realize that Christians in Asia must live and witness to their faith in cultures where other world religions are very present and influential.

I also mentioned in passing that I unexpectedly found myself on two occasions actually forced to witness to my faith. One of these occasions happened on a plane flight. I was seated next to a middle-aged women. She was smartly dressed and looked like a professional person. We made conversation, and she said she was returning home to Thailand from a conference in Shanghai. She said she

and her husband owned a business.

Having told me those things about herself she asked what I did for a living. I replied, "I teach theology and ethics in a school preparing men and women for the Christian ministry." She said, "Then you are a Christian believer. Then the women explained that she and her husband were Buddhists and that they took their faith very seriously.

"We work hard and earn a good income, so we can help other people in need," she said.

She went on to explain that all adherents to Buddhism should try to act compassionately. She said that she knew that Christianity also taught people to love others, so that, she said, the two religions were teaching very much the same thing.

Then she explained that Buddhists do good works, so that in the next life they will be born into a better

existence. I knew she was referring to the teaching about karma, the doctrine that by doing good deeds a person can remove the burden of past deeds and be reborn into a better life.

After explaining the beliefs that motivated them to do good works, she asked me, "Well, what do you believe?" I felt really put on the spot: how, I asked myself, should I explain my Christian faith in a few sentences, especially to this highly intelligent, deeply believing Buddhist?

I began saying that Christian faith also teaches that people ought to help their neighbor in need. I also went on to say, "We Christians believe that God created the world and all people. We also believe that we do not have to do good works to come into a right relation to God, because God sent his own son, Jesus Christ to give us a right relation to God."

By saying that that I was trying to explain that we Christians do not believe we have to free ourselves from bad karma by doing good deeds. Rather, we believe that Jesus Christ does that for us. But at the end of my explanation, I wondered whether I had been able to express the deep differences between Buddhism and Christianity on this issue of how God deals with our bad deeds.

The second occasion I found myself witnessing to my Christian faith was with a graduate student of a Chinese medical university. This student had been my tour guide through the university, which I visited because of my interest in medical ethics. Her English language ability was very good.

During the tour of the university the student asked me what I taught. I said, "I teach Christian doctrine."

She said, "Well, of course, all religious belief is ridiculous!"

I asked her whether she knew anything about Christianity. She said that she didn't really know much about the Christian faith. Having seen a Christian church on my way to the university, I asked if she had ever been inside a church. She said no, but that she was interested in seeing one from the inside.

Later we met and found the Friendship church. Obtaining permission to enter, we looked around inside. The graduate student had many questions. What was that table in the front of the church? Why did benches stand behind the table? What was the stone bowl? I tried to explain what an altar, choir pews and a baptismal font were. I didn't feel as if I was making much sense to her, although when I explained that Jesus had a last meal with his disciples before he was killed, she seemed to understand.

Then, suddenly looking on the wall, seeing a banner of Jesus the Good Shepherd, she asked, "Who is that?"

"That is Jesus, the Good Shepherd," I answered.

"Who is the Good Shepherd?," she asked.

"Jesus was the man who God sent to find people who were like lost sheep because they had wandered away from being in good relation to him," I said.

She made no response to that, and after a few more minutes in the church we left the building, said "good-bye" and went our separate

ways. Walking back toward my hotel, I realized I had just witnessed directly about the Lord to someone who may never have heard the Gospel. I was very moved. I realized how different teaching Christian doctrine was from directly witnessing to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, as the Good Shepherd. At the time I felt I had presented my faith in Christ very poorly.

Nevertheless, that brief encounter was one of the most meaningful religious experiences of my life.

*David Scott
William Professor of Theology and
Professor of Ethics
Virginia Theological Seminar*



TRUE GIFTS

Nola and I thoroughly enjoyed our 1988 Christmas celebrations - and the lead-up to them. Perhaps it's because we were 'snowed under' with gifts.

On St Nicholas' Day (and remember that St Nicholas became Santa Claus) the first great gift arrived. In the evening we met an old Chinese friend, Wang Hua-chung, (whom I had tutored in Taipei) at the Taupo airport. He was the first gift and we spent happy hours sharing memories, and the days showing him some of our little part of New Zealand.

The second gift arrived on Christmas Eve, in the noon. Our son, his wife and our grandson arrived mid-afternoon. It was great to spend time with them, have an extra Christmas dinner and swap presents. We also talked quite a bit!

During the evening we received a telephone call from Jeremy and Shan Shan Somerton, whom I'd married in Taipei and who now live in Taichung. They were in New Zealand, staying at Taupo, which is just forty minutes by car from where we live in Mangakino. When they heard I would be the celebrant at Midnight Mass they said they'd come through.

Following the service they came home for tea and a slice of Christmas cake. And a good long talk about each other's lives since last we'd been together in Taipei. This was our third gift.

Early next morning, Christmas Day, Our son and his family left to travel to Robyn's parents for their celebrations. We left soon after for Hamilton to visit Nola's brother and be his guests for dinner. After dinner we

sat and talked - and dozed! This was our fourth major gift. Notice how it was only inadvertently that these gifts involved material things? The important gift was the person or the people with whom we were. All involved were sharing both ourselves and food.

But they weren't the only gifts. Many of our dear friends of our Good Shepherd days, some of whom have gone to other parts of the world, now sent cards and messages. We heard about the new lives some are settling into.

We rejoiced with the Cozarts and their new baby; and marvelled at the wonders of Love which had come into our home from so many people,

When you stop and look carefully at St Matthew's and St Luke's

stories about Jesus' birth the same thing happened. Luke spoke about the shepherds coming to see and worship God's gift to Humanity. Matthew told us about wise men travelling hundreds of kilometres to do the same thing. One group of visitors were the outcasts of society, the other despised foreigners. The three gifts the wise men brought were incidental to the story,

People coming together and sharing hospitality. People visiting and worshipping. People in contact with friends and family. These are true Christmas gifts. Now, at the start of 1909, we should resolve to share true Christmas gifts all year.

By Rev. Bruce Cockburn

Bruce was formerly English chaplain at Good Shepherd Church



TAIWAN NOTES

While a student in Chinese art and culture for many years in France and other Western countries, I have had very little contact with their original land: last January was my first visit to Taiwan, and only my second to Chinese land. The official purpose was a conference about the use of computer in Chinese studies held by Academia

Sinica. Thanks to the generous hospitality offered by Bishop and Mrs. Chien, I was able to stay in Taipei for a week after the conference.

The connection between the Episcopal church in Taiwan and myself goes through Nathaniel Hsieh, the Taiwan pastor who established a mission in Paris. He is now attached to

the American Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in Paris where I have been worshipping for 20 years. I am currently in charge of the Chinese Culture Club, a group created last year by Father Hsieh to present Chinese culture to a varied membership. The Western public is generally very interested in Chinese traditions, but also rather ignorant of the specifics. We get people together to discuss topics (so far ranging from art to tea) and enjoy mutual friendship. Getting the members in contact with the Mission will be a natural development for some, and all will become aware of its work.

Because my attending the Academia Sinica conference had been decided in November only, I had not been able to establish personal contacts in Taipei. My field of research is early photography in China, and I usually use my trips abroad to research the subject. This trip was very different, however, because beyond extending personal hospitality, my hosts kindly offered me the unique opportunity to accompany them on several significant occasions. This is how the quiet scholarly week I had envisioned turned into a wonderful time of visiting and sharing, with people who seemed to become instant friends. Hospitality was boundless, whether we could communicate overcome the language barrier or not -- I do not speak Chinese.

Thus, my first day in the city saw me with Mrs. Chien at the local market. I then moved on to the jade and flower market: I was for several

years in charge of flower decoration at the American Cathedral and love flowers deeply. I noticed the tropical vegetables, and also the dominance of plants compared with my part of the world, where cut flowers are the norm in shops.

I found that being totally unable to read was one step worse than not speaking. I could only look and try to understand what was going on (and, not insignificantly, where I was). People were helpful. I was never short-changed in my dealings in Taipei, and I wish visitors could say the same of Paris! I soon noticed that in general you can get into the stores and look without unwanted interference. I did a lot of that over the following week during my long walks across the city.

Whenver someone was there to answer, I asked questions about what had surprised me. Thus, the nice music played by the garbage trucks, quite similar to that of our own ice cream vans, is meant to call people to bring their garbage out. I also finally understood why people's postal addresses are so complex: one of the numbers is for the lane, and major streets are divided into sections. New Year was coming close, and customs include thoroughly cleaning your house (this I found was true also at the Bishop's office). As I was going, I found myself filling my pockets with small things, including the little golden charms specific of the season. Shaped to evoke wealth and good fortune, they will make the nicest of presents at home. For my team of helpers for the

New Year festival in Paris, I found some evoking the spring festival, very apt.

Spiritual and local life experiences were diverse also. They had started the previous week with a visit to temples during which I had been deeply impressed by the fervor of the people. I went back to my own creed on Sunday with a religious service at the church of the Good Shepherd, where I was taken by Mrs. Chien and her French speaking daughter Ya-mine. This was a very moving bilingual service, which I had no trouble following, especially as to the music. I loved the moment when all people actually leave their seats to share peace with one another. The following night saw me in Tamsui where Bishop Chien was ordaining the chaplain to the Technological College. Parishes from all over the island were represented by people and three choirs. It was both friendly and magnificent, and certainly the highlight of my week.

Sunday had also seen a wedding, the ceremony and banquet taking place at a restaurant. We found ourselves with lady friends of Mrs. Chien's: they deserve praise for valiantly struggling to hold a conversation with the foreigner. At such a wedding, people move from table to table to visit their friends and exchange toasts. I discovered that in Taipei wedding photos are made before the ceremony, and copies given to the guests. Several dresses are used. Guests take home what is left, such as the flower

arrangements and the balloons. I did not need dinner that night, but found a night market to explore.

The real wonder was the discovery of the memorial park early in the morning, just around the corner. I had seen early morning calisthenics in the mainland, but this fairytale place generated a very special and peaceful atmosphere despite the activity. People exercised in groups or alone, songbirds in cages had their morning outing, people enjoyed group karaoke or had an early picnic. Later would come the kites and the wedding photographs. I found myself loving this park at all times of the day and went through it at every occasion.

So went the week, in retrospect very fast and happy, alternating friendly contacts (a presentation of early China photography to an English-speaking group, dinner with Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Ma to discuss their forthcoming trip to Paris and visit to the Cathedral, a whole day in Tamsui where Joy Chiang, daughter of the President of the Technological College, took two overseas visitors to the old missionary buildings); introductions to local ways of life (museums and temples, day and night markets...) The last day saw me at Suang-lien Presbyterian Church, learning about their program for the blind.

Then it was over. Everybody said: "You must come back." I will.

*Dr. Regine Therieux
American Cathedral in Paris*

APOLOGY AND THANKS

I wish to extend an humble apology and heartfelt thanks to Miss Shin-Fan, Miss Margaret Chuang and Mr. Yao-Wen Cheng for translating, respectively, Rev. Chen's, Dean Lin's

and Rev. Lai's Hong Kong articles from Chinese into English. The December issue was much more interesting because of their contributions. *Elizabeth Sah*



MARY and MARTHA

Today's familiar gospel story of the sisters Mary and Martha, (Luke 10:38-42) provides a look at two modes of service to the Lord and to the Gospel. Here, Jesus, as a guest in a home, becomes himself the dominant figure in the story, as he "turns the table around" on our usual understanding of active ministry.

"Martha" and "Mary" have often been used as examples of opposite types of relationships to God. Martha has been associated with the more practical aspects of Christian servanthood; while Mary and her contemplative stance represent a more mystical approach. Much emphasis has been placed on the "good part" or the "right thing" as the Good News Bible says it, which Mary has chosen and of which she is not to be deprived.

Certainly one message we do find in this story is that a spiritual relationship to God is primary. Unless we learn to sit at the Lord's feet and

give heed to his words, we can offer no more than a superficial substitute for discipleship. That is the lesson Martha here had to learn. It is especially appropriate as a reminder in our very active culture, which puts such prime emphasis on performance over heart listening and inner transformation.

Jesus' intent is to show that the contemplative life of listening to His words is to have precedence over all other worldly concerns.

Responsible, caring, practicality - a virtue Luke has graphically portrayed in the Good Samaritan story preceding this account - must never get in the way of our developing a deeper relationship to God.

Yet all of the "so-called" "active" vocations - and there are many modes and types - have been clearly endorsed by the Lord's ministry as legitimate expressions of what it means to love your neighbor as yourself. People who are especially

attuned to the inner life must not look down on those whose service is caught up in the material, physical care of others. God calls for both, and Jesus performed both functions in His work on earth. The Lord refused the temptation to turn stones to bread; nevertheless, he fed five thousand people in their real hunger.

We don't know the exact nature of Martha's work here. The text does not tell us whether her responsibility as hostess meant supervising servants who prepared the meal, or whether she had to do all the work herself. Even if there were servants, directing other people could be a demanding task, and we may readily see why Martha would feel burdened when she realized that her sister was completely absorbed in listening to Jesus, to the exclusion of helping with the hospitality of the occasion.

Sometimes, our busyness as we go about performing good, legitimate service, is so all-consuming and so satisfying that we can't see beyond the steam hovering over the pot - or the needy, sincere faces depending on us in the moment. Thus, the example of Martha's ministry is a challenge to us to make sure that the good which we can readily achieve, as represented by Martha, does not become a substitute for the good portion Christ offers us, as represented by Mary.

Making effective plans, developing responsible outreach, and performing acts of mercy are all excellent endeavors in themselves. Scripture is clear on the subject. Yet all the functions of the redeemed community - from teaching children to missionary work, to cleaning up a kitchen, to maintaining group financial records - are finally effective only in so far as people come to know the ultimate Source and reason for all our labor, Jesus Christ.

The right thing is the desire which will not be taken from Mary, because it refers to her inner motivation, the care of her personal incentive for true service to God and God's people. This insight traces the meaning of ministry to its very root. Unless purpose for action can be provided along with sincere active service - such as supplying food for the hungry - the lives of the people ministered to will remain empty even after they have been physically fed.

Similarly, unless regained health brings a person an opportunity for creative accomplishment, that person will be little better off than during the illness. Unless the efforts to develop positive situations for those who lack them also offer a sense of values worthy of living for, any material success will eventually pall and become mere boredom.

Mary's "right thing" is the motivation that gives to the

service which Martha may undertake whatever worth it may have. The first commandment is to love the Lord your God with all your heart. It is that love for God that empowers us also to love our neighbors. But we cannot love God in the abstract. Again and again we must find ourselves sitting and listening at our Lord's feet. We must become "Mary" at times; just as we also emulate Martha's practical service.

Yet it is clear from this lesson that it is only in the time that we spend in close fellowship with Jesus,

pouring out our hearts before Him and listening as He reveals Himself to us through scripture and prayer, that we will grow deeper in our understanding of the meaning and purpose of the Christian life. By seeking both to serve well and to pray well, we will move toward the balance which God desires for us in our lives of dedication to the Divine Will.

*The Very Rev. Samuel Lin
Dean, St. John 's Cathedral*



CATHEDRAL of ST. JOHN

December 13, Advent III, was an especially busy day for the English language congregation. The Eucharist that morning had additional music by Kirk Johnson, a professional American musician who has played classical music at the National Concert Hall , as well as jazz in local haunts. Mr. Johnson has been a musical contributor to churches in the US, Malta, and the Near East.

The really big event of the day of the day was the baptism of 2-month old Favour Onyekachi Chika Eneasator of Nigeria and Taiwan. His parents are Charles and Chien Li Mei Eneasator and godparents included Paul James Opiah. Additionally Richard Sah provided the sumptuous

monthly birthday cakes, including champagne since Elizabeth has a December birthday.

Even from those of us far from home, Christmas was no disappointment. Christmas Eve saw a combined English and Chinese liturgy, beginning with a candle-lit "Service of Light" from the Prayer Book, and a Eucharist with hymns and carols sung simultaneously in Chinese, English, Tagalog, and a number of other languages.

I, as your reporter, sampled each of the many dishes served following the service [purely in the interests of Ecclesiastical journalism, you understand] and I found them to be as "Yuletide" as any snowy "White

Christmas" could have provided. Some of the Filipino members of the congregation stayed on, singing carols well past midnight.

Christmas Day saw another dual language service, a pot luck brunch [also excellent, I can attest] and a program of Church School classes.

In that vein, I'll mention the new English language Bible Study at 6 PM on the second Saturday of each

month. This supplements the Cathedral's Chinese Bible Study on the first and third Saturdays. The English language Bible study wrestles with English, Chinese, Greek and the Book of Acts. All are welcome to attend.

In January, there were no birthday people present at the 17 January service but we celebrated anyway with the February Celebrants blowing out the candles.

News and Events from Good Shepherd Church Taipei

<http://www.dfms.org/taiwan/goodshepherd>

A quote from Revelation 21:7 "God will dwell with them.. they will be God's peoples..." set the theme

for this years' Combined Taipei English Speaking Congregations' Service for Christian Unity. This was the second year Anglican, Baptist, RC, Presbyterian and Taipei International Churches had gathered to celebrate our unity in Christ and to pray that it will grow. The service was a joyous evening and it is planned to have our next combined service for Pentecost in Friendship Presbyterian Church.

Computer users will be interested to know that an English web site is now on line. This will change as soon as we link to Anglicans on Line. At this moment additions are being made as comments and corrections come in. Eventually this will link up with many sites and provide a valuable contact for

the overseas Chinese Community as the Chinese parts are added. While this has been happening links have been made with our close neighbours in the Japanese Church

<http://www.threeweb.ad.jp/logos/mlweb/> where there is another interesting link to explore. In addition to keeping the local congregation up to date through e-mail and the Internet an overseas supporters list is kept. If you want to be on this list please contact the English Chaplain to stay in touch with all events and news.

A new apartment has been purchased for the English Chaplain in Peituo on the border with Tien Mu near the Veterans Hospital. The new location provides a quieter and more accessible place for living and meeting. When the move is completed the address and contacts will be published. The parish will now have the advantage of more space to

relocate the library while providing office space for the English Chaplain and guest space for visitors.

1 999 new faces for a new vestry - Marc Wall [English Warden], Mark Ohlson [legal & convention delegate] David Trebing [finance] John Hill Cathy Tyng, alternates Jeff Gowman & Lisa Highfill. Bill Bryson

while stepping down from the vestry will be looking after Stewardship. Andrea Ohlson will be in charge of the Sunday School. Lay readers will be Bill Bryson, Steve Schaufele & Dave Trebing. The Combined Vestry meets monthly as does the English Executive except during the holidays.

Rev. Graham Doyle

E-mail gtdoyle@ms19.hinet.net

TAICHUNG

Welcoming Catherine Lee

St James' Church in Taichung is happy to Welcome Catherine Lee. Catherine arrived in Taiwan on January 4th from the U.S. as a mission partner with the Church Mission Society (C.M.S.), which this year celebrates 200 years of working with the Anglican Church throughout the world. From 1990 to 1997 Catherine was with C.M.S. in Tanzania, East Africa, teaching in a primary school. In Taichung Catherine will take one semester to study Chinese before starting to teach at the St. James' kindergarten. Catherine will also be teaching some adult English classes and work in the Church office. Catherine is anxious to meet and get to know many people in the Episcopal Church in Taiwan.

News from the English Language Congregation at St. James'

The English-language congregation at St. James is made up of - Westerners - teachers, students, missionaries and business people,

Taiwanese - mostly young professionals, and a few Filipinos - mostly contract workers doing home care and industrial work - who join in when they can. We meet each Sunday at 9:30 and invite a guest speaker to present a sermon or homily to the congregation. We are especially grateful to Reverend Jeff Oschwald, Reverend Ron Adhikari and Reverend Mark Harbour for their commitment to the St' James English Congregation. On the Third Sunday of Each Month we hold a Eucharist Service which is celebrated by the St. James' rector Reverend Dr. Charles Chen.

After the Sunday service at 9:30, we have a fellowship group that meets from 11:15 to 12:00. This is followed by lunch at a local restaurant for those who want to participate.

This Christmas the St. James English Congregation was pleased to make a donation to a home for the handicapped in Chiayi.

At the End of March Ken and Ann Sudderth, two of our most faithful members who drive from Chiayi to Taichung each Sunday to worship at St.

James, will be moving to Hualien. We are saddened that they will be leaving the congregation but our prayers will be with them as they move on. Each departure from St. James English Congregation always seems to be followed by new faces. Recently we have had many new visitors from Canada, South Africa, and many local

Taiwanese who are interested in meeting English speaking Christians. We are very hopeful that the new faces in our congregation will become regular members at St. James'.

Philip Gibson, Lay Reader

The Expatriate Experience

One problem that seems to affect every westerner I've encountered is that we used to have a checklist of things we were good at back home (driving, conversation, finding good pizza, making money, making jokes, making love, making good grades, collecting tea cozy's) but either we don't get a chance to do that here in Taiwan, or when we do it, it looks like we don't do it very well at all.

So when we go to church, we are looking for a place where we can feel competent for awhile. We want hymns we know, services we can predict, sermons that make us wonder about stuff, and then let us gently back to "Yeah, I was right all along". A kind of nostalgia for being pretty good while still being normal.

What I've just described, I've noticed in myself and others in Taiwan- BUT it seems to be a temptation back in the US too. What is the reason for it there, where we are not expatriates?

My own suggestion is that we ARE expatriates, even in Storrs Connecticut. The Homily in the New Testament called "To the Hebrews" calls us "strangers and pilgrims on the earth". ...Much better to pretend we are really citizens and "long time residents".

The desperate search for self-esteem may be because none of us really has the skills and experience of the locals (because on earth, there really are no locals, only expatriates masquerading as locals to fool each other), for our skills are more suited to another venue with another job description (if "playing a harp" doesn't strike a chord with you, perhaps "knowing and loving God eternally" does). Perhaps that's why some of us feel closest to being "normal" during the Liturgy- because it is a foretaste of Our Real Country.

Dai Peng De (The cleric who used to be known as "Father Peter")

<http://www.dfms.org/taiwan>